Max's Mission.

By LULU JOHNSON.

Max would not have taken the short cut through the alley had not Tengrove, the clean cut young chap who had given him the note, impressed upon him the need of great speed.

"She will be leaving the house for the boat at 11," he had said as Max tucked the envelope into his breast pocket. "It's a half dollar if you get there before she leaves."

Max grinned with the wisdom of his fourteen years. For two years he had worn the blue uniform of the messenger service, and one learns a very great deal in two years. He winked at Tengrove and darted out of the office.

All of the boys steered clear of the alley, a slum of the financial district, for more than once messengers had been held up by a gang of roughs who had a pull with the political leader of the district.

But this letter did not contain money, and the short cut meant a saving of five minutes, and so Max took chances. He had almost reached the far end of the alley when an arm shot out from a dark doorway and dragged him inside the gloomy hall. Three or four half grown boys were drinking out of a can, but the vessel was set down as they crowded about their capture.

With unsteady hands the leader drew out the letter and eagerly opened it in search of the money he thought might be within. His face grew black as he laboriously read the note, and while one of the others went through the boy's pockets, relieving him of what small coins he had, the leader read aloud the tender pleadings by which Tengrove had hoped to win Dorothy Metheun's forgiveness. Max squirmed as the youths shouted in coarse glee at the burning words, but he could not wriggle out of the grasp on his coat collar. Not until the letter had been read did they let him go.

"Gimme the note," he demanded hoarsely. For answer the bully tore it into tiny pieces and threw them into the boy's face.

"There it is," he said roughly. "The next time we catch you, and you don't have money we are going to kill you. See?"

Max made a dive for the envelope and darted out of the entry, skillfully evading the kick aimed at him by his tormentor. He had no thoughts of the police. He must hurry to the Metheun house. There was no time to go back for another letter. Miss Metheun would be gone by then. It was not the first time he had carried notes for the nice looking man, and he was bound to see him out of this scrape.

By dint of stealing rides on the street cars, he made his way to the residential section and tore madly up the front stoop of the Metheun town house.

The butler shook his head in answer to the boy's demand for an audience with Miss Metheun. Miss Metheun and Mrs. Metheun had gone to the yacht. It was the Sylvia and she was lying off the yacht station. He did not think that there would be time to reach the landing before the yacht sailed.

"Gimme a dime," demanded Max. "I gotter run for it. I was frisked. Hurry up," he added impatiently as the butler stared at the demand. Something in his manner compelled obedience, and the stolid servitor handed over the coin.

The car seemed to creep down to the docks, but at last they came to the landing, and he dashed out on the pier. The watchman pointed out the Sylvia, and even as he spoke the boat began to move slowly from the anchorage. There was a power boat at the landing stage with a good natured young fellow at the wheel. Max dropped down to his side.

"Was you ever in love wit' a goil?" he demanded of the skipper. The skipper admitted the charge.

"There's a fellow what loves a goil on that boat Sylvia," he said. "Less'n I get a message to her he won't git her. Will you take me out?"

Max's earnestness was convincing, and, with a smile, the skipper nodded to the boy to jump in. Max sat gingerly upon the soft cushions, nursing the wrist that had been wrenched when he was fighting with the gang in the alley. He had roughly bandaged it with the rag he called a handkerchief, but now it was throbbing most unpleasantly.

The power boat slipped smoothly through the water, gaining rapidly on the Sylvia, and presently they were running side by side and with a "Tanks; you're th' real t'ing," Max had climbed aboard the yacht.

To the sailor who came to inquire his business he made demand for Miss Metheun and was led aft to where the party sat under the awnings.

"I got a message for you," he announced. "It ain't in writin'," he added as she stretched forth her hand; "leastwise it ain't written now."

"What is it?" she asked smilingly.

"It's a private message," he said meaningly as he glanced at a man who sat scowling at him. For a moment the girl hesitated, but for a third time Max's earnestness carried the day, and she followed him to the side of the boat. He drew out the envelope he had saved from destruction.

"That's all that's left of it," he apologized. "You know who he is. He told me to hurry, and I was runnin' through th' alley, and th' gang frisked me."

"They what?" she demanded.

"Frisked me," he explained—"went through me clothes, took me cush and read th' letter."

"The envelope is not sufficiently important to warrant such strenuous efforts to deliver it," she said a little coldly.

"But th' letter was a peach," he explained. "Th' gang read it out, and I remembered it. I come to tell you what was in it. Th' nice lookin' guy said he was a darn fool to put up such a holler, and he was sorry he made th' beef. He took it all back in big words—I can't remember 'em—but he laid down all right."

"What do you mean?" she asked. "Mr. Tengrove apologized. Is that it?"

"Apologized ain't no word for it," said Max expansively. "It was down in the gutter for his. You c'd make him jump over a stick if you wanter. He backs up about not wantin' you t' go on the sail wit' dis guy, but he wants yer t' come back an' marry him afterward an' not hitch up wit' th' pirut over there." He indicated the scowling host, and Miss Metheun smiled faintly. Max thought that her smile was one of discredit, and his heart sank.

"I can't spiel no big words," he said disconsolately, "but on th' level if you c'd have heard him you'd be cryin' by now. He's dead gone on y', an' he's the candy kid all right. Please can't I tell him it's all right, lady? He's the real goods, an' he's sorry to beat th' band. I'm givin' it to y' straight."

Dorothy smiled. She, too, had regretted the quarrel that had followed Tengrove's jealousy and the earnestness of the boy was its echo in her own heart.

"You may tell Mr. Tengrove," she said softly, "that his envoy is a most able pleader and that his mission has been successful."

"Dat's yes?" demanded Max. "He c'n git th' ring?"

"It is yes," she assented softly. "Tell Mr. Tengrove that I shall be back in town day after tomorrow."

The yacht had drawn inshore and now it swung up to a dock. Dorothy leaned over and deliberately kissed the freckled cheek. "You were a dear to take all that trouble," she said softly. Max looked up with shining eyes.

"It was wort' it f'r th' kiss," he said as he climbed on to the dock. "I wish I was Mr. Tengrove; betcher life I do."

RESPECT YOUR WORK.

Don't Go at It Complainingly, but Put Your Heart In It.

It ought not to be necessary to ask a man if he likes his work. The radiance of his face should tell that. His very buoyancy and pride in his work, the spirit of unbounded enthusiasm and zest, ought to show that. He ought to be so in love with his work that he would find his greatest delight in it, and this inward joy should light up his whole being.

A test of the quality of the individual is the spirit in which he does his work. If he goes to it grudgingly, like a slave under the lash; if he feels the drudgery in it, if his enthusiasm and love for it do not lift it out of commonness and make it a delight instead of a bore, he will never make a very great place for himself in the world.

The man who feels his life yoke galling him, who does not understand why the bread and butter question could not have been solved by one great creative act instead of every man's being obliged to wrench everything he gets from nature through hard work, the man who does not see a great beneficent design and a superb necessity in the principle that every one should earn his own living, has got a wrong view of life and will never get the spiritual results out of his vocation which were intended for him.

The man who does not look upon his vocation as a gift unfolding, enlarging, cultivating, lucrative, elevating process, the ross of which could come in no other possible way, has made a very poor guess at life's riddle.

Multitudes of people do not half respect their work. They look upon it as a disagreeable necessity for providing bread and butter, clothing and shelter—as unavoidable drudgery instead of as a great man builder, a great life unifier for the development of manhood and womanhood. They do not see the divinity in the spur of necessity which compels man to develop that thing in him, to unfold his powers by his struggle to attain his ideal, to conquer the enemies of his prosperity and his happiness. They not see the curse in the unearned dollar, which takes the spur out of motive. Work to them is sheer drudgery, an unmitigated evil. They cannot understand why the Creator did not spread ready made on trees. They do not see that the best thing in man has ever been developed by the necessity of labor. They do not see the sublime, the grit, the nobility and manhood in being forced to conquer when they get.

What a pitiful sight to see one of God's noblest made to hold up his head and to sing, to be cheerful and happy and radiate power, going about whining and complaining of his work, apologizing for what he is doing and doing the fact that he should have work at all!—Success Magazine.

Explanation.

"That fellow," said Tete de Veau, "is always getting the old joke about the difficulty finding a woman's pocket."

"But, you know," L'Oignon explained, smiling, "he married a rich wife."—Exchange.

Not What He Meant.

"Now, I suppose," said Miss Passay, "that you could guess my age."

"Really," replied Mr. Meanwell, "I—er—would be to. I'd be sure to—er—guess high."—Philadelphia Press.

LIFE ON THE ISTHMUS

Y. M. C. A. Worker Writes That the Conditions Where Canal is Being Built Are Not so Bad.

Some aspects of life on the Isthmus were portrayed in an entertaining manner by Mr. M. J. Stickel, the popular secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association at Cristobal, in a letter to the home organization soon after his arrival at Panama. He wrote:

"I have been here five days, and I think I am prepared to write a book on 'Panama: Past, Present and Future.'

"I have been the entire length of the Canal Zone twice, and have viewed every phase of mading dirt as well as mud fly. At Culebra the air is vibrant with the noise of steam-shovels, dirt-trains, and machine-shops. This is varied by the shock of frequent blasts of dynamite as great masses of rock and clay are blown off the side of the hill to satisfy the rapacious shovels.

"I must say this, however: never in all my life have I been so disappointed in a place—pleasantly so, however. The climate thus far is most delightful. It is hot in the sun at midday, but most pleasant in the shade. I have slept under a blanket every night.

"The one constant source of surprise is that things are not foreign, nor scarcely tropical. One has to conjure with his senses to realize that he is not in Galveston, or Atlanta, or even St. Louis. Everything is American.

"This is a land of contradictions and perversions. Wagons turn out to the left side of the road; waiters serve you on the left side of your plate; the sun rises in the Pacific, and has his going down in the Atlantic; the Pacific end of the Canal is east of the Atlantic end; breakfast is called 'coffee,' luncheon is called 'breakfast,' although dinner, strange to say, is actually called 'dinner.' You can't buy anything, except stamps, with money save from Chinamen or natives; if you purchase ten cents' worth of stamps and hand in a $2 bill you will be given $3.80 in change. The gold employees are all white, and the silver ones are all yellow or black; and so on.

"It is a fine place for women and children. The average health among them is very much above that in the States, and the man who has his family here is very fortunate in every way, except, perhaps, in regard to children who are ready to go to high school."—From "The Lighter Side of Life at Panama," by Gertrude Beeks, in The Circle for October.

Kann Collection to be Sold.

Mr. Henry J. Duveen, a well-known art dealer, returning yesterday from Europe on the Lusitania, made an authoritative announcement concerning the disposition of the great collection of Rodolphe Kann in Paris. Many of the paintings are to come to this city, but Mr. Duveen says that he is not permitted to tell the names of the American purchasers.

"In view of the fact, however," said he, "that the name of Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan has been frequently mentioned in the cable dispatches I may say that he has seen this collection, and that in whatever he wishes to acquire he will be protected. The collection will remain intact until December, when it will be dispersed.

"The collection includes 11 Rembrandts, six of the best examples of Franz Hals, as well as masterpieces of Rubens and Van Dyck. It has several notable Gainsboroughs. The value of it has been estimated at from $4,000,000 to $5,000,000, for it includes many of the best works which could be obtained in Europe."—New York Herald.

Mark Twain's Appreciation.

The Matilda Ziegler Magazine for the Blind has moved from its old offices, at 1931 Broadway, to larger quarters, at 306 West Fifty-third street. Hereafter the Company will print the magazine itself. A pleasant little incident has linked the October issue of the magazine with the name of Mark Twain. Every month a $5 prize is offered for the subscriber sending in the best joke or epigram, and the prize-winner in the October number is a little witticism directed at Mr. Clemens. In his acknowledgement of the advance copy containing the jest at his expense the humorist says: "We know a valuable thing when we see it, and this is precious beyond the dreams of avarice."—New York Sun.

The jaws of a wasp are so powerful that the insect can cut its way through shells.